

## The Commoner.

on the ground that it was engaged in the violation of the neutrality laws. While this vessel was in the custody of a United States Marshall it was forcibly wrested from his control and put to sea. Our government made a demand upon the Chilian government that this vessel and its cargo be returned to the officers of the court, and this demand was recognized. In his message to congress, President Harrison, referring to this point, said: "It would have been inconsistent with the dignity and self respect of this government not to have insisted that the Itata should be returned to San Diego to abide the judgment of the court." Is it not clear here that Benjamin Harrison, who stood high among the lawyers of the country, did not entertain the notion that in the interpretation of the neutrality laws the judiciary was without authority and that the executive alone had jurisdiction.

In the same message President Harrison referred to a trial in the federal court of California which resulted in a decision holding that inasmuch as one of the contestants in a war had not been recognized as a belligerent, the acts done in its interest could not be a violation of our neutrality laws. "From this judgment," said President Harrison, the United States has appealed that we may know what the present state of our law is; for if this construction of the statute is correct, there is obvious necessity for revision and amendment." If this was a matter of purely executive authority the government would not have appealed. A cabinet meeting would have been held and notice would have been served upon the federal court that in attempting to interpret the laws, the judiciary was trespassing upon the right of the executive branch of government, a branch which according to old fashioned notions was designed for the execution rather than the interpretation of laws. But President Harrison, it will be observed, said that an appeal was taken "That we may know what the present state of our law is." There we have very clearly stated Benjamin Harrison's idea that when any doubt existed concerning a law, the judiciary must determine it; the judiciary was the branch of government which was to interpret law. But Benjamin Harrison was educated in the old fashioned school of law as well as in the old fashioned school of statesmanship. He had not learned that in this government the executive is the single power before which all other powers must bow. He had not learned that the mandate of men in executive positions is potent irrespective of the equities of the situation.

### Reviving the Ship Subsidy.

The Chicago Tribune is authority for the statement that several conferences have recently been held "between the persons most directly interested," and that it has been decided to pass the ship subsidy bill during the next session of Congress. The Tribune says that an effort will be made to popularize the subsidy scheme, and a literary bureau will give out arguments tending to show that a Nicaraguan canal makes it essential that the merchant ma-

rine should be built up by a subsidy plan. It adds that these conferences have been held under the personal direction of Mr. Griscom, President of the International Navigation Company, and it is promised that the bill will be amended "in several particulars." It is not likely, however, that "the persons most directly interested" will permit this bill to be amended in any way that will seriously interfere with the object of the bill, viz., the transfer of vast sums of money from the pockets of the people into the pockets of a few subsidy grabbers without recompense to the public.

### A Deserved Compliment.

The Herald of Columbia, Mo., one of the best democratic weeklies in that good old democratic state, pays a deserved tribute to a faithful democrat and an able editor when it says:

The retirement of Capt. Alexander A. Lesueur from the editorship of the Kansas City Times is a political and journalistic event of high importance. It will have an especial significance in the rearrangement of the tangled web of state and municipal politics. But it is not that of which mention is made. We wish merely to pay tribute to the man A. A. Lesueur.

Few finer examples of public servants have ever held office in this state. We have not always agreed with him. He has done much of which we could not approve. But his strict integrity, his devotion to duty, his high ideals have made his administration of the difficult office of secretary of state a most successful one. As a journalist Captain Lesueur was brave, clean, courteous. He never stooped to low and little things. He held himself above the slime and ooze of petty politics. There is no grime upon his hands. As a gentleman Captain Lesueur has been above reproach. He has not mixed with the mud-bedaubed, but he has in private life set an example which is well worth imitation.

Now that Captain Lesueur has no longer a great newspaper at his back with which to reward or punish, we take pleasure in setting down in the Herald what is his simple due.

Captain Lesueur merits all the good things that can be said about him. The Times, under his editorial control, became one of the foremost champions of democracy, pure and undefiled. It is to be hoped that the journalistic profession will not permanently lose the services of so able and conspicuous a member.

### Gambling, Great and Small.

The following press dispatches illustrate the point which THE COMMONER desires to make:

Le Mars, Ia., April 17.—The Le Mars National bank did not open this morning. Thomas F. Ward, vice president and manager of the institution, is a self-confessed embezzler to an amount of from \$25,000 to \$30,000. He has also absconded. Ward departed Monday night and yesterday Cashier Frank Koob received a letter from Ward saying:

"Dear Frank: I leave tonight for God Almighty knows where. This board of trade business has ruined me. Save me from indictment if you can. I will pay back every cent I can."

Then the writer explained the funds from which he has been stealing to cover his losses.

Vancouver, Wash., April 21.—Crushed by the disgrace of their exposure President Charles Brown and Cashier E. L. Canby of the First National bank, which was closed yesterday, decided to end their troubles in death. As soon as the

shortage was discovered Brown and Canby fled. It was believed that they were in hiding somewhere near town, as there had been no train on which they could have left. A posse of angry depositors searched all night for the missing bankers, and if they had been found there might have been a double lynching. But the fugitives spared their victims the trouble of taking their lives.

Soon after daylight this morning a little party of the searchers directed their attention to a clump of woods two miles north of town.

In the center of the wood is a little clearing, and here the man hunt came to an end. Lying on the ground before them the men who had sought their capture saw the dead bodies of Brown and Canby. Both had used the same weapon and Canby had evidently died first, as the revolver was found in Brown's hand. It is evident that Canby put the muzzle of the revolver in his mouth and then blew the top of his head off. Brown then took it and shot himself in exactly the same way, falling over Canby's body.

Friday evening Canby, upon being told by Bank Examiner J. W. Maxwell that the bank would not be permitted to open Saturday, went out in the yard behind the bank and attempted to shoot himself. His revolver failed to explode, although all five chambers were loaded. After failing to shoot himself Canby went back into the bank and he and President Brown left together later, taking his revolver. When Examiner Maxwell confronted the bank officials with the shortage of \$81,000 which he had discovered both men admitted their guilt. It is said that Brown and Canby had been speculating in stocks.

Beside Brown's body there was found a package containing \$25 and a note saying that the money belonged to his daughter. Upon Canby's body the following brief note was found:

"Dear Wife: I feel what I am about to do is for the best. Forgive me if you can and try to live for our dear children. God bless you all. Good-by. "NED."

"April 19."

These dispatches, showing how trusted business men were led from the path of honesty to crime, disgrace and, in two cases, death, suggest a contrast.

Ever and anon a crusade against vice is undertaken in New York and other large cities. Attempts are made to close the gambling dens and eloquent sermons are preached in denunciation of games of chance. Sometimes the crusades are led by ministers and there is no question that these ministers would immediately secure the expulsion from their churches of any person convicted of running a gambling place or of frequenting one. This is good as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough.

Tell one of these crusaders that a young man who has, by the exercise of industry and economy, saved up five hundred dollars, has been enticed into a gambling place and has there lost his little fortune, and no language will be sufficiently severe to condemn the folly of the young man, the crime of the keeper of the house and the wickedness of the officials who permit such an establishment to exist.

But change the details of the picture; tell the crusader that it was a middle aged man instead of a youth, that the amount lost was fifty thousand dollars instead of five hundred, that the speculator used trust money and that the gambling was done on the board of trade or the stock exchange—and what will be the reply? Will the crusader denounce the board of trade and the stock exchange and condemn the officials who permit them to exist? And